

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

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FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0024

INFO AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, UN, NP

SUBJECT: POTENTIAL UNFDAC/NEPAL PROJECT

1. AFTER SEVERAL YEARS OF DISCUSSIONS AND MISSIONS
DIRECTED TOWARDS DEVISING AN ANTI-CANNABIS PROJECT RE-
QUESTED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL, IT NOW APPEARS THAT
THE UNFDAC IS MOVING TOWARDS ESTABLISHING A MULTI-SECTORAL
PROGRAM CONTAINING AN INCOME SUBSTITUTION SECTOR AND A LAW
ENFORCEMENT SECTOR. MR. FRANK VERHAGEN, DIVISION OF
NARCOTIC DRUGS OFFICER ASSIGNED TO WORK OUT PROJECT AGREE-
MENT ARRIVES KATHMANDU MAY 21 FOR
VISIT OF 1 TO 3 WEEKS IN COMPANY OF TECHNICAL EXPERT.

2. THE INCOME SUBSTITUTION ELEMENT OF THE PROJECT IS
BASED ON THE RECOMMENDATION OF AN FAO SILK EXPERT WHO
VISITED NEPAL LAST YEAR AND SUGGESTED THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
A NON-MULBERRY SILK INDUSTRY. MR. VERHAGEN EXPLAINED THAT
IN MULBERRY-BASED SILK INDUSTRY, SILK-WORMS MUST BE MAIN-
TAINED IN ARTIFICIAL ENVIRONMENT AND ARE SUSCEPTIBLE TO
MANY HAZARDS. IN NON-MULBERRY SILK INDUSTRY SILK-WORMS
ARE MAINTAINED IN NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OUT IN THE WOODS.

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PREVIOUS FAO TEAM THOUGHT THIS INDUSTRY MIGHT BE AP-
PROPRIATE FOR NEPAL SITUATION AND UN NARCOTICS ORGANI-
ZATIONS ARE INTRIGUED BY POSSIBILITY THAT SILK,
WHICH IS HIGH VALUE/SMALL VOLUME PRODUCT, MIGHT BE AP-
PROPRIATE SOURCE OF FARM INCOME IN PLACE OF NARCOTICS.

3. ACCORDING TO MR. VERHAGEN,

HE WILL BE IN NEPAL UP TO THREE WEEKS WITH WORLD'S LEADING EXPERT ON NON-MULBERRY SILK INDUSTRY, WHO IS ON UNFDAC CONSULTANCY. THEIR GOAL WILL BE TO CONSULT WITH GOVERNMENT, TO CHECK OUT INCOME SUBSTITUTION PROSPECTS OF SILK INDUSTRY AND TO SELECT POSSIBLE SITE. IF ALL GOES WELL, SILK EXPERT WILL RETURN TO NEPAL IN FALL WITH EXPERIMENTAL BATCH OF SILK-WORMS. IF THIS EXPERIMENTAL PERIOD WORKS OUT, UN WILL ARRANGE FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS TO STUDY NON-MULBERRY SILK INDUSTRY. GOVERNMENT WILL APPARENTLY AGREE TO CREATING A SITE OF NON-MULBERRY SILK RESEARCH AND FOR A REARING STATION. IF THE TRAINING AND CONSTRUCTION OF A SITE PROCEED, UNFDAC WILL HIRE AN EXPERT CONSULTANT FOR ONE YEAR TO INTRODUCE A PILOT PROJECT WHICH WILL RAISE NON-MULBERRY SILK-WORMS, DISTRIBUTE THEM TO FARMERS IN CANNABIS PRODUCING AREAS TO SEE HOW MUCH SILK THEY CAN PRODUCE AND WHETHER IT CAN BE MARKETED. CONCURRENTLY FUND WOULD UNDERTAKE ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY STUDY OF WHAT INVESTMENTS, MARKETING, EQUIPMENT AND TRAINING WOULD BE REQUIRED FOR NEPAL GOVERNMENT TO DEVELOP WIDER SCALE NON-MULBERRY SILK PRODUCTION SCHEME. VERHAGEN ENVISAGES WHOLE INCOME SUBSTITUTION PILOT PROJECT WOULD LAST NO MORE THAN TWO YEARS AND COST A TOTAL OF \$140,000.

4. RECOGNIZING NEED FOR LEGISLATIVE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSISTANCE AT SAME TIME AS INCOME SUBSTITUTION ASSISTANCE, FUND WOULD PROVIDE \$60,000 FOR CONSULTANTS ON LEGISLATION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AND DRUG CONTROL ADMINISTRATION.

5. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH CANNABIS IS NOT USG PRIME CONCERN, THE GOVERNMENT OF NEPAL HAS ASKED UNFDAC ASSISTANCE IN COMBATTING IT. THE PROPOSED PROGRAM, WHILE MODEST IN SIZE, DOES INDICATE SOME ORIGINALITY IN CONCEPTION AND SHOULD BE INTERESTING TO FOLLOW. IT ALSO INVOLVES UN NARCOTICS ORGAN IN AREA OF POTENTIALLY SERIOUS NARCOTICS CONCERN. MR. VERHAGEN WILL UNDOUBTEDLY DEVOTE ENTHUSIASTIC EFFORTS TOWARDS FORMULATING A PROGRAM WITH REASONABLE PROSPECTS OF SUCCESS. SHOULD AMEMB KATHMANDU BE INTERESTED IN DISCUSSING THE PROJECT WITH MR. VERHAGEN, HE CAN BE CONTACTED THROUGH THE UNDP RESREP. ALTHOUGH MR. VERHAGEN, AS JUNIOR OFFICER, IS RETICENT TO TAKE INITIATIVE IN CONTACTING EMBASSY, WE BELIEVE HE MIGHT BENEFIT FROM BRIEFING ON LOCAL SITUATION BY EMBASSY NARCOTICS COORDINATOR. SINCE HE IS WELL AND FAVORABLY KNOWN TO THE MISSION, WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY COURTESIES WHICH MIGHT BE EXTENDED TO HIM ALONG THESE LINES. END COMMENT. VANDEN HEUVEL

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